

Message Text

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TAGS: AORG, UN, XF

SUBJ: UN DESERTIFICATION CONFERENCE: CONTINGENCY
POSITIONPAPER ON ZIONISM-RACISM AND ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUES

THERE ARE THREE POTENTIAL ISSUES THAT COULD ARISE AT THE
DESERTIFICATION CONFERENCE CONCERNING ZIONISM-RACISM AND
ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUES. THESE ISSUES AROSE AT THE HABITAT
CONFERENCE AND CONTRIBUTED TO A PROCESS OF POLITICIZATION
OF THAT CONFERENCE TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE ISSUES FOR
WHICH THE CONFERENCE WAS HELD. AN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES
RESOLUTION WAS ALSO ADOPTED BY THE WATER CONFERENCE. THE
FOLLOWING IS PROVIDED AS CONTINGENCY GUIDANCE ON THESE
ISSUES. IF ANY OF THEM SHOULD ARISE THIS SHOULD BE RE-
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PORTED AT ONCE TO THE DEPARTMENT IN ORDER THAT FURTHER
GUIDANCE CAN BE TRANSMITTED.

A. ZIONISM-RACISM

THE ISSUE

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE NO CURRENT INDICATIONS THAT THE ZIONISM-RACISM ISSUE WILL ARISE AT THE DESERTIFICATION CONFERENCE, EXPERIENCE AT PREVIOUS CONFERENCES DICTATES THAT THE US DELEGATION PLAN FOR ITS INTRODUCTION. WE WILL ALSO HAVE TO

AWAIT RESULTS OF THE LAGOS ANTI-APARTHEID CONFERENCE. THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES ADOPTED AT HABITAT -- OVER THE STRONG OPPOSITION OF THE US AND OTHERS -- INCLUDED REFERENCES TO UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 3379 (XXX) WHICH TERMED ZIONISM A FORM OF RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION.

U.S. POSITION

1. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THE US DELEGATION SUPPORT OR ABSTAIN ON A RESOLUTION WHICH INCLUDES EXPLICIT OR VEILED REFERENCES TO THE ZIONISM-RACISM EQUATION. THUS WE OPPOSE EVEN GENERAL REFERENCES TO ALL GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS ON THE SUBJECT OF RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, BECAUSE SUCH REFERENCES WOULD AUTOMATICALLY ENCOMPASS RESOLUTION 3379.

2. THE DELEGATION SHOULD THEREFORE SEEK TO HEAD OFF INCLUSION OF THESE REFERENCES, ARGUING THAT THEY ARE EXTRANEOUS TO THE AIMS OF THE DESERTIFICATION CONFERENCE AND COULD VERY WELL SIDETRACK THE CONFERENCE FROM ITS MAJOR TASKS. THE DELEGATION SHOULD REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

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DEPARTMENT ANY EFFORTS TO INCLUDE SUCH REFERENCES IN CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS, AND PROVIDE DRAFT TEXTS AS SOON AS AVAILABLE, INCLUDING COSPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS. THE DEL SHOULD ALSO SEEK TO DELAY CONSIDERATION OF THE ITEM UNTIL IT RECEIVES INSTRUCTIONS.

3. IF TIME CONSTRAINTS PRECLUDE WAITING FOR INSTRUCTIONS, THE DELEGATION SHOULD ARGUE STRBNUOUSLY AGAINST THE INTRODUCTION OF THIS ISSUE. THE DELEGATION SHOULD CALL FOR A VOTE ON ITEM INCLUDING REFERENCES TO ZIONISM-RACISM, VOTE AGAINST THE ITEM, URGE OTHERS TO DO SO, AND MAKE A STATEMENT INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- THE US DELEGATION REGRETS THAT THIS CONFERENCE, WHICH IS DEDICATED TO FOCUSING ATTENTION ON THE IMPORTANT ISSUES OF DESERTIFICATION, HAS INSTEAD SUCCUMBED TO THE RHETORIC OF MEANINGLESS POLITICAL CONTENTION.

-- THE UNITED STATES OPPOSED THE EFFORT IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO EQUATE ZIONISM AND RACISM, AND WE OPPOSE ANY REITERATION OF THAT GROUNDLESS COMPARISON.

-- NOT ONLY DO WE OPPOSE THE EQUATION ON ITS OWN LACK OF MERIT, BUT WE ARE ASTONISHED THAT IT HAS FOUND ITS WAY INTO THIS CONFERENCE, AND HAS SUCCEEDED IN DIVERTING THE ATTENTION OF SO MANY STATES FROM THE IMPORTANT BUSINESS OF HANDLING DESERTIFICATION-RELATED PROBLEMS.

-- THE US AND OTHERS MAY BE FORCED TO CONCLUDE THAT IMPORTANT CONFERENCES, SUCH AS THIS ONE, WHICH ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BE SIDETRACKED INTO TOPICS OF CONFRONTATION MAY NOT BE WORTH THE EFFORT THAT GOES INTO THE PREPARATIONS.

-- THE UNITED STATES CANNOT SUPPORT, AND WILL CONTINUE TO OPPOSE STRENUOUSLY, EFFORTS TO LINK ZIONISM AND RACISM AND EFFORTS TO ENDORSE, EVEN INDIRECTLY, RESOLUTIONS WHICH
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ALLEGE SUCH AN EQUATION.

B. ISRAELI PARTICIPATION

THE ISSUE

ALTHOUGH NOT LIKELY, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT ISRAELI CREDENTIALS MAY BE CHALLENGED AND/OR AN ATTEMPT BE MADE TO BAR/LIMIT ISRAELI PARTICIPATION IN THE DESERTIFICATION CONFERENCE. AT HABITAT, LIBYA OBJECTED TO ISRAEL'S PRESENCE BUT CONFINED ITS OPPOSITION TO THE INSERTION OF A RESERVATION IN THE REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE. IF THIS ISSUE DEVELOPS INTO A SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE, IT COULD BE THE BAROMETER INDICATING THE SERIOUS POLITICIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE.

DISCUSSION

SOME AFRICAN STATES HAVE RECENTLY SOUGHT TO MODERATE EXTREME ANTI-ISRAEL MEASURES IN INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS. CONCRETE RESULTS WHICH HAVE RESULTED FROM THIS INCLUDE UNESCO'S RATIFICATION OF ISRAELI PARTICIPATION IN THE EUROPEAN REGION, AND THE AFRICAN DEFEAT OF A MOVE TO RECOMMEND ISRAELI EXPULSION FROM THE UN WHICH SURFACED AT THE OAU SUMMIT IN KAMPALA IN 1975. THE RESULTS OF THE LAGOS CONFERENCE WILL BE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN THIS REGARD.

US POSITION

1. THE US DELEGATION SHOULD REPORT IMMEDIATELY ANY INDICATIONS OF A CHALLENGE TO ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONFERENCE. WHILE AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS, THE DELEGATION
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GATION SHOULD CONSULT WITH OTHER WESTERN AND AFRICAN DELEGATIONS TO SEEK WAYS OF THWARTING THE INTRODUCTION OF SUCH MEASURES.

2. THE US WOULD VIEW RESTRICTIONS ON ISRAELI PARTICIPATION AS A SETBACK TO CURRENT EFFORTS TO CREATE A CLIMATE FOR SERIOUS PEACE NEGOTIATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

3. IF PROTESTS TO ISRAELI PARTICIPATION ARE CONFINED TO THE INSERTION OF RESERVATIONS IN THE REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE, THE US DELEGATION SHOULD MAKE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD:

"AS WE HAVE SAID ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS, THE US BELIEVES THAT THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE MAY PROPERLY EXAMINE ONLY THE CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATIONS, AND IT CANNOT MAKE POLITICAL JUDGMENTS OF ONE SORT OR ANOTHER. WE REGRET THAT SOME STATES HAVE CHOSEN THE SHORT-SIGHTED TACTIC OF OPENING THIS IMPORTANT CONFERENCE WITH AN EXTRANEIOUS POLEMICAL ATTACK ON ANOTHER STATE. WE HOPE THE CONFERENCE WILL PROCEED, FREE OF CONTENTION, TO DISCUSSION OF DESERTIFICATION ISSUES."

C. THE ARAB-ISRAEL CONFLICT

THE ISSUES

ISSUES INVOLVING THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO) AND THE ARAB-ISRAEL CONFLICT COULD ARISE IN AT LEAST TWO WAYS: (A) CONCERNING ECOSOC RESOLUTION 2126 WHICH CALLED ON THE UN TO CONSULT AND TO COOPERATE WITH THE PLO TO DETERMINE AND TO ADDRESS THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC NEEDS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE; OR (B) INVOLVING THE RIGHTS OF THE ARAB POPULATIONS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE ISSUES TO THE US BECAUSE OF THEIR POTENTIAL IMPACT ON THE INTERNAL STABILITY OF STATES IN THE

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REGION AND ON THE CHANCES FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, DEBATES INVOLVING THE PLO OR ARAB-ISRAEL ISSUES IN MULTILATERAL FORUMS ARE OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST TO THE UNITED STATES.

IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, THE DELEGATION SHOULD SEEK TO POSTPONE CONSIDERATION OF ANY ARAB-ISRAEL ISSUE AND REPORT IMMEDI-

ATELY TO THE DEPARTMENT. SUCH A DELAY WILL ALLOW FULL CONSIDERATION OF THE SPECIFIC WAY IN WHICH THE ISSUE HAS ARISEN. THE DELEGATION'S ARGUMENTATION SHOULD AIM PRIMARILY AT BUYING TIME UNTIL INSTRUCTIONS CAN BE RECEIVED FROM WASHINGTON. THE DELEGATION MIGHT ARGUE, IN THIS RESPECT, THAT WE ASSUME NO PARTICIPANT WANTS TO REPEAT THE HABITAT EXPERIENCE, WHERE POLITICAL CONFRONTATION OVERSHADOWED AND DETRACTED FROM THE IMPORTANT PURPOSES OF THE CONFERENCE.

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